Daily Report

Supplement

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Congress of People's Deputies Stenographic Record

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Congress of People's Deputies Stenographic Record

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NOTICE TO READERS: The Daily Report is publishing the full translation of IZVESTIYA's "stenographic record" of the Congress of People's Deputies. Additional supplements will be issued as translated material becomes available.

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["USSR Congress of People's Deputies. Stenographic Record."—IZVESTIYA headline]

[Text]

Sixth Session

30 May 1989. Kremlin Palace of Congresses. 1600.

Comrade R.N. Nishanov is chairman.

R.N. Nishanov: Comrade deputies! We are continuing the work of our congress. Deputy Kaipbergenov has the floor.

T. Kaipbergenov, writer, chairman of the board of the Karakalpak ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic] (Khodzheyliyskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Karakalpak ASSR): Esteemed Comrade Chairman! Esteemed comrade deputies! Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev mentioned the imminent ecological crisis in his report as though in passing—that is, among the country's other problems. I should announce that the ecological catastrophe that has taken place and is taking place today in the Aral, in terms of its scale and prolonged consequences, is comparable to the latest large world catastrophes. There are victims, there are people who will be cripples for the rest of their lives. There is poisoned, mutilated land; there are abandoned and destroyed villages. If you fly in an airplane over the expanses of the Aral area, you will see white, lifeless salt marshes. They have covered the land like snow. According to specialists, for every 1 hectare of land in Karakalpakiya, Khoreziya, and Tashauz Oblast in Turkmenia, 540 kgs of salty sand fall annually, carried from the dried-out former water area of the Aral Sea.

It is dangerous to grow fruits and vegetables on our land today.... The land that fed us has been poisoned and destroyed once and for all. Science has not yet been able to purify a single clump of land in Karakalpakiya from herbicides, pesticides, and defoliants which have been applied by the ton on each hectare over past years. If you take our soil into your hands today it no longer smells like soil; it smells of chemicals, and it crumbles between your fingers. From the upper reaches of the Amudarya, all the used water that runs off irrigated land is discharged back into the Amudarya. The residuals of toxic chemicals in the river have reached such a life-threatening level that fish die in this water. In the Aral area people are dying unnatural deaths and are doomed to extinction—the huge doses of toxic chemicals that penetrate our organisms with dust and salt water destroy man's genetics. There has been a sharp increase in the percentage of deformed newborn babies. According to incomplete data from outpatient examinations conducted in the autonomous republic, two of every three people examined have been ill, mainly with typhoid, intestinal cancer, and hepatitis. There are also cases of cholera.

The strangest thing is that the majority of the ill people are children. Disability is constantly increasing. In certain regions of Karakalpakiya, physicians do not recommend feeding children mother's milk—it is toxic. This is hard to believe: Mother's milk has turned into a poison.

In this situation it is difficult to say with confidence whether or not there will be a single healthy person left in the Aral area by the beginning of the next century. In the near future the area will become a habitat of dependent people who are not capable of feeding themselves. Life in the epicenter of the ecological catastrophe is deteriorating from day to day. Fruits and vegetables are saturated with toxic chemicals. The provision of the basic food products in the country is somewhat lower than the average for the country.

At each meeting the voters assault me with questions: Tell us, is there a country on the planet that will allow its own population to be poisoned?

We have come to this place in life not out of our own will but because of the central planning agencies. This is essentially a consequence of the extremely criminal economic policy.

It can be objected that the government is concerned about us, that it adopted the decree of the CPSU Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers of 19 September 1988 "On Measures for Radical Improvement of the Ecological and Sanitary Situation in the Region of the Aral Sea, Increasing the Effectiveness of the Utilization and Stepping Up the Protection of the Water and Land Resources in Its Basin." Yes, this decree does exist. But, in the first place, it does not fully solve the problem when we are speaking about—treating a fatal illness. Any half-measures are not therapy but simply a postponement the burial time. I wish to recall that Comrade Gorbachev, in a meeting with the residents of Tashkent on 7 April 1988, responded to the question of the fate of the Aral by saying that variants are being developed for restoration of the Aral Sea. But the decree does not say a word about the restoration of the sea. In the second place, these decrees are intended for the long term, and we need immediate assistance. Finally, this decree is working poorly so far. This year not a single liter, not a single drop of the 8 cubic kilometers of water necessary for sanitation has been put into the Aral Sea. The Aral tragedy has become the most popular, almost a fashionable problem. It is written about frequently and willingly in the press and discussed at all kinds of meetings, conferences, and symposiums. New meetings and speeches at them by individual leaders are beginning to remind one of the tale of Scheherazade from the "Thousand and One Nights." But there

the heroine wins one more day of life with each tale, whereas our comforting meetings, at which nothing is decided, on the contrary bring us closer to death. My speech is not a pathetic cry about our impoverished situation. The Aral needs not tears but water. We must not forget that the death of the Aral threatens death to more than just all of Central Asia. It will entail unpredictable, most likely catastrophic, changes in the climate over an immense part of the country. It is already threatened with global disaster.

It is generally known that in Central Asia farming exists because of two rivers: the Syrdarya and the Amudarya, which bring their water to the Aral. The dozens of cubic meters of moisture that evaporate from the sea each year are returned in the form of snow to the glaciers of Tyan-shan and the Pamir. Now the natural cycle has been disturbed. If we do not save the Aral, where will we get the water in the rivers that flow from the Pamir and Tyan-shan?

Early frosts in the autumn and late spring have become customary. The salt and dust storm that raged on 29 April of this year is also the result of the sharp reduction of the water area of the Aral Sea. Previously the air currents over it became a shield on the path of the cold winds from the Arctic. The current disaster of Central Asia, with snow falling in May and almost all the planted areas dying out, is another threat of destruction. Immediate resolute actions are needed.

First: In Uzbekistan there is a deputy group for checking on the implementation of government decisions. But the destiny of the Aral depends on more than the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan. Therefore, I demand that we create a special deputy group of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies with extraordinary authority, as not a single one of the republics can resolve this ecological disaster by itself. (Applause).

Second: The areas planted to cotton must be reduced rapidly and sharply. Yes, we know that cotton is not only textile raw material but also a strategic product. Apparently we will have to keep the strategic cotton, but we must get rid of the textile cotton. In no case should cotton be exported. At this point to trade in cotton is literally to trade in the health of our compatriots. (Applause).

Third: It is time to put an end to the extensive methods of farming. We need a law for assigning criminal liability for expansion of areas planted on irrigated land. There is no other way of dealing with people who want extra hectares—and this means extra irrigation—to fulfill the plan. We must immediately introduce payment for water, and it is time to start keeping track of it.

The last thing: As we ourselves cannot yet cope with the ecological catastrophe, we should not hide it, but honestly tell the world about it. We must officially declare the Aral zone an ecological disaster and call for help from the world community.

As we have already been convinced, when it comes to misfortune we have something to learn from the foreign specialists, and we have something for which to thank the kind residents of other countries. But up to this point the shores of the Aral, this forbidden zone, this secret territory, reminds one of a reservation. Foreign journalists and specialists are not allowed there.

I wish to make another suggestion: Each month and each quarter to publish information about the number of people who have died from diseases related to the ecological catastrophe; the amount of water put into the Aral; and the continuing decline of the level of the sea and the sizes of its water area.

In concluding my speech I wish to announce the orders of my constituents. They hope that in the near future the first leader of the country will come to their land.

I repeat, our catastrophe was made by human hands. Man must rectify it. Thank you for your attention. (Applause).

R.N. Nishanov: The floor is turned over to Deputy Tamaz Valerianovich Gankrelidze, director of the Institute of Orientology of the Georgian SSR Academy of Sciences. After Comrade Gankrelidze finishes, I shall tell you the order of business. Comrade Starodubtsev is to prepare.

T.V. Gankrelidze, director of the Institute of Orientology of the Georgian SSR Academy of Sciences, Tbilisi (Akhalshenskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Adzhar ASSR): Esteemed comrade deputies! In my speech I wish to touch upon events which have been raised repeatedly in one form or another at our congress. The congress actually began with paying homage to the memory of the innocent victims of the events of 9 April 1989 in Tbilisi. This is no accident. The Tbilisi tragedy shook us all and was a terrible blow to human values about which so much has been said at this congress, a blow whose social and political consequences are difficult to assess at this time.

I shall deal with questions that affect the very basis of the new course of our state which is called "restructuring," "renewal," "democratization," and "glasnost," on whose implementation, in the final analysis, the form and character of the further existence of our multinational country and, possibly, our entire planet, depend.

I shall touch upon the tragic events of 9 April in Tbilisi and try to give an interpretation to these events from the standpoint of the functioning of the legal mechanism in our state and from the standpoint of existing constitutional law.

We must reveal the whole truth and tell it all. Only then is it possible to obtain a certain legal guarantee that nothing similar to these tragic events will be repeated in the future.

The country and the entire international community know that on April of this year at 4 in the morning, under the pretext of dispersing an unsanctioned rally, there was a mass assault, unprecedented in its cruelty, involving human casualties, against innocent people participating in a peaceful demonstration in Tbilisi. The rally, at which up to 10,000 people had gathered, was peaceful; there was no violence, and there were no calls for violence. When tanks and armored personnel carriers appeared on the square in front of the government house, people, sensing the danger, stood with lit candles, sang old songs, and prayed. This entire picture can be reproduced precisely and in all the details from available video and photographic materials and from numerous eye-witness accounts of victims and other participants in the rally. (As far as I know, these video materials will be shown today at 1900.)

In addition to nightsticks, the military units used trenching tools and poisonous chemical substances, which was officially announced at a special commission of the Georgian SSR Ministry of Public Health, in whose work experts from Moscow and Leningrad participated, and later by international experts, physicians, and toxicologists who were invited here from Switzerland, the FRG, France, and the United States of America.

This military operation which was led by Colonel General Rodionov, the troop commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, was conceived, obviously, not as an operation for dispersing a peaceful rally but as a previously planned punitive operation for destroying people, because before the beginning of the operation there were no warning appeals or actions by the members of punitive expedition. Soldiers blocked the passageways, surrounded the citizens, and hit them with nightsticks and trenching tools, and they showed no mercy for the hungry people there, the girls and elderly women, the physicians and Red Cross workers; they pursued those who were fleeing, they caught up with those who were wounded and took them out of the hands of medical personnel, and they dealt blows to the local police workers who, performing their civic duty, were saving the lives of the citizens.

According to official information, 16 people died at the scene of the tragedy, 14 of whom were women. The oldest was 70 and the youngest 15. Three of them died in the hospital.

Later the central and military press and even PIONERSKAYA PRAVDA wrote that Georgian men had killed their own women and children, and the soldiers, you see, tried to save them and protect them from the attacks of their furious husbands. In general it is disturbing that the mass media, particularly with central press and television, and the "Vremya" program covered the events falsely and in a typical television way, asserting that the people were victims of a "throng that arose" out of nowhere. All this impresses us because of the incompetence and primitive handling.

One is especially shaken by the use of poisonous chemical substances against the demonstrators. All this is incompatible with the moral and legal norms adopted in a civilized society and should be regarded as a crime against the people themselves and humanity in general. It is a crime to use poisonous chemical substances, but it was no less of a crime to cover up this fact for a long time; this caused complications in the condition of or the death of victims poisoned by the gas because they could not be given the appropriate medical assistance promptly. Moreover, having concealed the use of poisonous chemical substances and not promptly conducted degasification of the region where the punitive detachments operated, the military authorities thus contributed to further mass poisoning of people, particularly children and adolescents, for 2-3 weeks after the tragic events of 9 April. For understandable reasons the military authorities stubbornly refused for a long time to admit to the use of poisonous chemical substances. The use of so-called "cheremukhi"—the tear-inducing substance chloroacetophenone—was admitted only on 14 April, and the utilization of the highly toxic substance CS—which is sadly known from Vietnam—was not admitted until the end of the month, and then only under real pressure from the community and people's deputies from Moscow, Kiev, and Saratov.

Foreign toxicologists recently established that among the poisonous chemical substances that were applied there was another strong, asphyxiating poison—chloropicrin, which was used during World War I.

From the very beginning the physicians lacked information about the composition and structure of the poisonous substances, and this made treatment extremely difficult and caused general agitation and indignation among the population. A large group of those who suffered declared a hunger strike over this.

As a result of an investigation it became clear that the chemical poisonous substances were used not only on the square in front of the government house but also in the adjacent areas. The soldiers threw poisonous capsules into buildings where people were hiding from persecution.

As of today 3,500 people have come to medical institutions with symptoms of poisoning; up to 500 of these are in the hospital for treatment, and some are still in serious condition. These figures are confirmed by representatives of the International Red Cross and a group of experts from the United States—"Physicians for Human Rights"—and experts from France—"Physicians Without Borders."

Events developed no less tragically after 9 April. The introduction of a curfew in Tbilisi, about which the population was notified a couple of minutes before it went into effect, entailed serious consequences. A half hour after the declaration of the curfew a young person

was killed by a bullet through the windshield of a car and several people were wounded, including a 12-year-old boy who was riding on a bicycle.

The negative consequences of the tragic events of 9 April are being felt to this day, particularly among children and adolescents, in whom foreign experts have established the syndrome of so-called "mass psychogenic reaction to a catastrophe."

We are registering an exceptionally high level of tension in the republic, which can develop into various unpredictable actions at any moment. Only complete openness full and punishment of the guilty parties can prevent the catastrophic influence of this tragedy on the behavior and moral condition of our compatriots throughout the entire territory of the country.

The tragedy of 9 April in the city of Tbilisi and its consequences are perceived by all Georgian people as a universal national disaster whose significance goes beyond the national framework and affects the human principles of the rights and freedoms of nations.

How could it happen that in a rule-of-law socialist state, tragic events played themselves out in violation of the basic constitutional rights of the people and generally recognized principles of human behavior? In the tragedy of 9 April in Tbilisi, one could see the complete bankruptcy of the legal mechanism currently in effect in the USSR whereby not only the destinies of people but the destiny of an entire republic can be attacked by irresponsible reactionary forces that are hostile to the process of democratization and progress. Do the people who gave the order to use the sharpened shovels and poisonous chemical substances against peaceful demonstrators understand that they are thus killing the spirit of an entire generation, of an entire people, and dealing an irreversible blow to interethnic relations, a blow whose consequences it is difficult to overestimate?

A legal analysis of the legitimacy of decisions made by party, soviet, and military departments regarding the events in Tbilisi on 9 April leaves no doubt that we frequently have irresponsible violations of the sovereign constitutional rights of peoples and that the process of forming a rule-of-law state in our country is still in the embryonic stage. We are calling for an open, public, and responsible investigation of this bloody battle in Tbilisi and the consequences of "bloody Sunday" of 9 April 1989 and for the disclosure of the real parties guilty of this crime and their punishment, even if they are among the highest echelons of military and political power.

If the guilty parties are not punished the public will perceive autocracy of the highest party apparatus and military command. It is necessary to give a political evaluation to the events that took place. The country's entire highest leadership should be aware of a planned action of this scale, with these political consequences.

Colonel General Rodionov in his justification of the punitive operation conducted on 9 April in Tbilisi refers to the sadly known ukase of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet of 26 July 1986, "On the Rights and Responsibilities of Internal Forces of the USSR MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] in Preserving Public Order." The tragic events in Tbilisi clearly showed how dangerous this ukase is when it is arbitrarily interpreted and placed on the agenda the need for its revision or even complete abolition, as was the case, incidentally, with certain other legislative acts, for example, that of 5 April, which strikingly coincided with the time of the tragic events of 9 April in Tbilisi. Related to this, in particular, is the question of the legal status of the so-called "special purpose" units and the actually specialized units—as they are called by the people—of professional killers who, when conducting the Tbilisi operations distinguished themselves by special cruelty and inhumanity.

During the investigation of the tragedy of 9 April and the subsequent period, the ignoble role in these events of Boris Nikorskiy, the second secretary of the Communist Party of Georgia Central Committee, became apparent. He did not even appear before the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet commission for investigating the events of 9 April. Therefore, it seems expedient for me to raise here, at the USSR Congress of People's Deputies, the question of the role and function in the union republics of the so-called "Second Secretary" sent and appointed from the center.

The practice of creating such an institution of "governor general" was associated with the time of "stagnation" or even with the preceding period and cannot be justified under the current conditions of political reforms and the growing sovereignty in the union republics. These people, as a rule, are not familiar with the national traditions, the culture, or the language of the indigenous population of the republic, which causes dissatisfaction among the broad public and a lack of confidence on the part of the people in this kind of leader. It seems that such an institution of "governor generals" is an anachronism under current conditions and should be abolished. All the leadership of the union republic should be elected exclusively from the local population, taking into account national ceilings and the national merit of the people populating the republic.

It is a manifestation of the highest degree of cynicism that insults the national feeling of the entire population of our republic that, for example, Colonel General Rodionov still sits on the USSR Congress of People's Deputies as someone elected by and representing the Georgian people despite the fact that his constituents have already expressed a lack of confidence in him as a deputy and recalled him in keeping with the existing constitution. (Noise in the hall). Colonel General Rodionov has neither the moral nor the legal right to remain a USSR

people's deputy from Georgia. The people's deputy should still be aware that he is elected by the people and protects their interests and not those who punish the people. (Applause).

Completing my speech regarding the tragic events in Tbilisi and their consequences for all the Georgian people I wish to quote the words the Catholicos—patriarch of all Georgia, the most holy and blessed Iliya II—uttered in a conversation with a member of the commission for investigating the events of 9 April, Academician A.D. Sakharov: "It happened that it was the Georgian people who bore this heavy cross and thus delivered other people from similar severe trials. Such a thing should never happen anywhere again." (Applause, some of the deputies stand).

R.N. Nishanov: Are you next? Please. The deputy asked for the floor for discussion. Introduce yourself, please. (Applause continues). Please come to the podium, Comrade Deputy. (Applause continues).

From the floor: Rodionov to the podium.

R.N. Nishanov: Comrades, please. There will be a report from Rodionov.

R.A. Bratun, writer, Lvov (Lvovskiy—Zaliznichnyy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Lvov Oblast): Esteemed Comrade Chairman! Esteemed deputies! I shall give a brief statement on my own behalf and on behalf of the deputies from Kiev: Chernyak and Yavorvskiy. We came here directly from barricades of the pre-election battles. We are afraid that our constituents will think we are dead, since we have not said anything from the podium. We sent notes to the presidium previously, but they were lost somewhere. I do not see any evil intent in this. But today we did not write notes knowing that the list of speakers was astronomically long. We are bringing the following proposal for your consideration: At the end of each work day we should allot an hour for brief announcements, important orders from constituents, references, and other orders—3-5 minutes each for those deputies who have something to say. Otherwise, it will be very difficult for us to report in our local areas. I think that long speeches are very good. But still, perhaps an hour should be given to the rest of us so that we can take advantage of this strict regulation and make brief announcements. Thank you for your attention.

R.N. Nishanov: I think that we should consult on this issue and work out some procedure at the end of the meeting.

There were several voices from the hall demanding that General Rodionov, the troop commander of the Transcaucasian Military District and deputy, express his attitude toward the events in Tbilisi. We shall now hear him; I asked that he prepare. I would also like to remind you that at the beginning of our meeting a question was asked of the minister of defense regarding this issue. I think there should be an answer to this question. Or should we hear Comrade Rodionov?

From the floor: (Inaudible).

R.N. Nishanov: Shall we hear Comrade Rodionov?

Voices from the hall: Yes.

R.N. Nishanov: All right. Comrade Rodionov, I invite you to the podium.

I.N. Rodionov, colonel general, troop commander of the Krasnoznanennyy Transcaucasian Military District (Borzhonskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Georgian SSR): Comrade, I might not be able to keep this within the allotted time....

R.N. Nishanov: I ask all the speakers to adhere strictly to the regulations. Just now I refused a note concerning the speech of Tamaz Valerianovich Gankrelidze asking why he was given 20 minutes. I ask you to stay within the allotted time.

I.N. Rodionov: But I did not ask for the floor.

R.N. Nishanov: Please.

M.S. Gorbachev: We shall look and see. This is such a complicated issue.

I.N. Rodionov: Esteemed comrades! Let us get down to brass tacks. I think it necessary to give a political evaluation to what happened in Tbilisi. Without a political evaluation it is impossible to interpret and give a correct evaluation to what happened, the consequences—and the consequences are terrible. Therefore, allow me to remind you of what the deputy who spoke before me said here: The rally was peaceful (I am reading from the appeal to you), the rally was peaceful without the application of violence, without appeals for violence, the slogans did not contradict the existing constitution, when on Rustaveli Prospekt there appeared armored personnel carriers, and so forth.

Verbatim from ZARYA VOSTOKA, the organ of the Communist Party of Georgia Central Committee, for 14 April: "Human material, live people, among whom there were women and adolescents, were needed by the leaders of extremist groupings not only to propagandize their anti-Soviet, antistate, and antisocialist views but also—even more dangerous—to carry out their subversive antistate activities."

Those who now, after the tragedy, speak about the peaceful nature of the rally forget that at the very time over the central square of the city day and night there were vile appeals for physical violence against communists, and anti-Russian and nationalistic attitudes were being fanned. (Noise in the hall).

R.N. Nishanov: Just a minute, we have given over the floor, there is a regulation, let us allow him to say what he has to say, and then we will continue the discussion.

I.N. Rodionov: I heard you, comrades: This is the way they refused to let me speak at the Communist Party of Georgia Central Committee Plenum after the tragedy. Why? I shall discuss this at the end. Because it was a double.... (Noise in the hall).

I.N. Rodionov: Allow me to continue. Anti-Russian and nationalistic attitudes flared up, I quote the newspaper of the Central Committee. The evaluation was given immediately after the events of 14 April. Groups of well-trained and organized people forced their way into enterprises, halted the work of hundreds and thousands of people, returned passenger buses to the parks, broke windows, desecrated monuments, and sent shock detachments to other regions of the republic, sowing dissension, discord, and disorder everywhere. There were real threats of taking over vitally important facilities in the republic. This is the way, comrade deputies, the political situation was assessed by the republic leadership. A majority of members of the city party aktiv and a majority of people's deputies of Georgia were participants in the meeting of the city party aktiv at midnight on 8 April.

The party aktiv supported the decision of the bureau that the situation was becoming extremely explosive, with unpredictable consequences. All measures of influence and appeal to reason have been exhausted and there remained the extreme measure—to apply force. Thus, when extreme measures are applied, the consequences can be extremely severe.

Further (from ZARYA VOSTOKA in the assessment of what took place): It was not the introduction of troops that complicated the situation, but the complication of the situation that called for the introduction of troops. One must now question the republic leadership—who went for help? This could put an end to it. But allow me to discuss certain questions that are bothering you and make certain suggestions.

On 6 April at the rally (in front of 6,000 people) under the leadership of the leaders of the Tseleteli Society they read and approved an address to the president and Congress of the United States and to the NATO countries, which suggested:

1. To devote a UN meeting to the day of Georgian sovereignty—26 May.

2. To declare 25 February 1921 the day of occupation of Georgia by the bolshevik forces of Russia.

3. To render help to Georgia in seceding from the union, including through the use of NATO or UN forces.

I shall read out the slogans that were the most widespread throughout the city and especially in the region of the government house, including in English: "Down with Russian communism!" "Russian oppressors, out of Georgia!" "Down with the decadent Russian empire!" "Down with the communist regime!" "The USSR is the prison of the people!" Beyond these, there were open calls for violence against all who were not in favor of these slogans. This is the Georgian variant of restructuring and pluralism of opinions. This is the only variant that suits those who signed the appeal to the congress on behalf of the Georgian people who, incidentally, are continuing to live honestly and work, and are not participating in these orgies. But everything possible is being done to draw the workers in as well.

Now, comrades, a couple of words about the text of the "Appeal to the USSR Congress of People's Deputies From the Commission of the Georgian Supreme Soviet."

We have done everything to avoid casualties.

I continue to read verbatim: "...Such a large number of people at 4 in the morning on the 9th is explained by the fact that during the day of 8 April, along the main street of the city, armored equipment passed through the thick of the people at the rally. This caused a general feeling of alarm and a desire on the part of the citizens, including women and middle-aged men, not to leave their young compatriots alone in the disaster...."

This was done so that people would disperse and there would be no serious consequences.

Further in the text: "There were no warning words or actions by the authorities or military personnel. The soldiers blocked the passageways, surrounded the citizens, and beat them with clubs and trenching tools."

In the front there were internal forces armed with nightsticks and shields, and they advanced slowly. I must tell you that all approaches to Rustaveli Prospekt and the adjacent streets were promptly blocked with dump trucks loaded with reinforced concrete, rocks, and gravel, and buses—the air was let out of all the tires. The barricades made of motor vehicles were in three rows. There were troops from the Soviet Army, an airborne regiment that had come from Kirovabad; its task was to advance after the internal forces that were clearing Rustaveli Prospekt, take the government house and the Communist Party of Georgia Central Committee under guard, and block Rustaveli Prospekt until morning to prevent any assemblies there. The situation was very difficult, and I am sure that the person who spoke here was not there on the Prospekt. I was there from 3 am and stayed as long as necessary, and I saw everything with my own eyes.

About the trenching tools. Comrades, soldiers were going there to prevent gunfire, and it could have broken out in this situation, and we took away all of our personnel's

arms; only the officers and noncommissioned officers had firearms. The personnel had trenching tools as part of their equipment. Some people held their trenching tools in their hands because a soldier needs something with which to protect himself. I shall discuss this further.

There were mistakes on our side. We were in a hurry, as we had the experience of Sumgait, Kirovabad, Nakhichevan, and Zvartnots, and there were casualties everywhere. This is why we sent our equipment through, because the casualties had not been gathered up, and the time was early—4 in the morning. What could we do? In front of us were the internal forces, without any firearms. I have already said that among the Soviet Army only the officers and noncommissioned officers had firearms. We slowly pushed the crowd to one side, and nobody was surrounded. Not a single shot was fired on the square. Through the megaphones we warned people to disperse. We did not count on having such strong and stubborn resistance. Both barricades and armed detachments of fighting men. Incidentally, 172 military servicemen were wounded and 25 were hospitalized, and they were wearing helmets, bulletproof vests, and they had shields. So many helmets and so many bulletproof vests that were not effective....

But here is the main thing: Come to see us in Tbilisi when these rallies are being conducted and you will see with your own eyes. Incidentally, comrades, according to official information, 16 people died at the site of the tragedy. I ask you here, before the deputies, to give their names and the cause of each death. But I am telling you (and this is where we began our discussion), not a single one of the people who were gathered up—and the square was cleared by 6 am (from 4 to 6)—not a single one had a cut or a stab wound. Not one of the 16. (Noise in the hall). Do not interrupt me. The investigation agencies have gone into this. You understand, everything is emotional here, but I have already heard so many rumors of all kinds: how the paratroopers forced a 70-year-old woman to walk 3 kms and finally dumped her somewhere in the bushes, and so forth. There are so many rumors. Just now, when I heard the speaker before me I sat quietly and, though disturbed, recalled our magic Russian words.... I ask you to read their names.... (Applause). Read them one by one, and what each one died of. In 2 hours, 16 people were gathered up.

Since there was not a single wound on any of the bodies, they began to talk about gases. But what kind of gases could be used in 2 hours when nobody had gas masks or other means of protection? So all this reduces down to the fact that people were walking with candles and saying prayers. Yes, there were prayers. The esteemed head of the church asked the people to disperse; he appealed to their reason, but the microphone was ripped out of his hands, and they would not let him speak, and through this microphone they called the crowd of people to resist. This is why I say that this is a provocation and not a popular gathering.

From the hall: (Inaudible).

I.N. Rodionov: Yes, three people died in the hospital, and one of those who died had cuts on his head. But he could have been injured some other way, a 34-year-old man. There were many people like this.

From the floor: Wind it up, please.

I.N. Rodionov: Yes, I will, but this question is very fundamental for me.... Give me a chance to speak.

I am especially disturbed, comrades, by discussions of the use of chemicals. This was done by special agencies, and I asked for the representative of the investigation agencies to report the results to you, both about those who died and about the application of chemical substances. So as not to hold your attention too long I should say that Major General Yefimov, who is in charge of the internal forces, appeared on television twice to explain what they were using. Again, to prevent more serious consequences they used a tear gas-like Cheremukha, which the internal forces have. Again, it was not used by the Army. But twice he tried to speak on television, and twice they would not let him speak. Let us try to figure out why. Let the comrades answer.

After all, if we had used chemicals they would have come into direct contact with a large number of military servicemen, and in the crowd there were also workers of the militia and the state security committee who had changed clothes. But only 19 people went for help—with slight traces of toxic substances of the irritant type.

The curfew is a matter of principle. The situation in the city after this tragedy was very complicated, very serious and explosive, with unpredictable consequences. By 7 pm, the bureau of the Communist Party of Georgia Central Committee had convened. Comrades Shevardnadze and Razumovskiy had already come to Tbilisi. The troops who were coming in were used to protect the avenues, facilities, and streets, and on the whole they encompassed the city to calm the population and to prevent unpredictable serious consequences. We were fully ready to enforce the curfew and declare the city in a state of emergency by 11 pm. At 8 pm, I was sent from the bureau to announce this. I arrived at the television studio and immediately sat in front of a camera, but again for incomprehensible reasons the announcement was made at 10:50 pm, 10 minutes before the beginning of the curfew. Please check with the television studio to see what time my statement was made. But why was it postponed until 10:50 pm?

Then there were the children. People write about how they were gathering flowers. But it was not children who were gathering flowers but mainly militia in disguise, and not a single one of them suffered when they were picking up the flowers after the funeral in front of the government house.

I am coming to the end, comrades. I appeal to the commission that is now working and ask them to figure out the cause of the 180-degree change in the coverage of events for the mass media.

Second, why at the very beginning of the investigation were the victims declared innocent, and why was the many-hour anti-Soviet orgy called a folk celebration?

Third, why at the very beginning of the investigation were the main people pushed away from the leadership of the republic and party and new ones appointed who immediately declared that everything had been decided without them and that they knew nothing about it? An example: On 22 April, at a conference of party and soviet workers in Tbilisi the newly elected first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, Comrade Gumbaridze (he is here), announced that at the bureau of the Central Committee, when adopting a decision about the events (from here it is verbatim): "An opinion was expressed that if necessary...(I emphasize—if necessary; and the decision was simple, and the party aktiv said that all measures had been exhausted and it was necessary to act only by force; otherwise, the consequences could be serious) to introduce special provisions. But I cannot but note that the majority of members of the bureau, including you personally, did not know the plan, the time, the forms, or the means of concrete implementation of this measure. I thought and I still think that it is never permissible and there is no justification for making such crucial decisions in a small group of people. I want you to understand me correctly." This is verbatim. But at the time of these events Comrade Gumbaridze occupied the post of chairman of the State Security Committee of Georgia and was a member of the bureau of the Central Committee. So, with whom could he work, and who could tell the truth here?

The former leaders are silent, and the new ones have denied everything. The mass media quickly changed their tune and began to distort the events and make fools of the people. It turns out in the end that the internal forces and the Soviet Army, on their own initiative, broke into the square where people were praying, singing songs, and dancing, and slaughtered people when they were left alone and committed other criminal acts. Where were the lawyers who so scrupulously accused the military servicemen of violating the rights and laws as well as the constitution before this tragedy (although it would be better to call it a provocation)? What did the people's deputies sitting in Georgia do to prevent the adoption of extreme measures and to report the truth to the congress after this? I suggest that the elected Supreme Soviet straighten out all of what happened in our republic, in Georgia.

I have been the commander of the military district there for a year. In May it was exactly a year since I arrived there. There were already problems in Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the NKAO [Nagornyy Karabakh Autonomous Oblast]. It was quiet in Georgia, and everybody was happy and proud of the fact that everything was peaceful in Georgia. But over the course of a year, as a result of this work of ours Georgia reached a point of adopting extreme measures.

I shall tell you another thing: Here we are talking about how bad 1937 was, but I think it is worse now than in 1937. Now people can talk about you on television, write about your newspapers, and the mass media can defame you however they wish and without justification. To address my constituents about this tragedy in an open letter, I had to disseminate this open letter as they did during the war over enemy territory—using aircraft and helicopters. In places where the military tried to paste it up the local police came along and ripped it down. This is the situation in Georgia, comrade deputies.

The most malicious newspaper in Georgia recently is MOLODEZH GRUZII. It has published more provocatory libel, in which it tries to defame the highest military and political leadership in the country. Incidentally, I am confident that the provocation was prepared for this.

Here is the result of the neglect: Neglect the political situation in the republic for a year before the crisis, take absolutely no effective measures, do not utilize the authority and opportunities granted to you, and then avoid responsibility for criminal inactivity, draw the Army in, and place all the responsibility on the highest political and military leadership in the country, on the eve of our congress, and then say nothing yourself, deny everything, and falsify everything that happened.

I ask the commission of the Supreme Soviet to deal with the provocatory publication of MOLODEZH GRUZII. I shall end my speech, comrades, again with words from ZARYA VOSTOKA of 14 April: "Those who flirted with, entered into double dealing, and made political capital from the complications, those who along with others bear direct responsibility for what happened today, are making more noise than anyone else, trying to cover up their fear."

I have nothing to add to this. I thank you. (Prolonged applause).

R.N. Nishanov: Dear comrade deputies! After two speeches one gets the feeling that it really is necessary to go into this very deeply, calmly, and completely.

A list for the commission that the congress is to form to deal with this matter has been distributed to the deputies. But for those who are seeing and hearing us on television and the radio I shall read off the members of the commission. The Estonian comrades ask that the name of one of their comrades be added to it.

As of today there are answers to requests from General Yazov,the minister of defense; General Kochetov, the first deputy minister of defense; Comrade Trushin, the first deputy minister of internal affairs; and also the

materials of the commission of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet. All these materials were turned over to this commission. Moreover, I would like to make you aware that today after 7 pm in the hall for meetings of the Supreme Soviet there will be a film on the events which was brought by the deputies from the Georgian SSR and also a film taken by the curfew group.

Now, about the composition of the commission. I propose a draft decree of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies concerning the formation of a commission for investigating the circumstances associated with the event in the city of Tbilisi on 9 April 1989. The chairman of the commission would be Vladimir Vasilyevich Karpov, first secretary of the USSR Union of Writers, Moscow. Members of the commission would include: Sergey Andreyevich Andronati, director of the A.V. Bogatskiy Physics and Chemistry Institute of the Ukrainian SSR Academy of Sciences, Odessa; Khardo Yulovich Aasmyae, sector chief of the Planning and Design Bureau Maynor, Estonian SSR; Natalya Petrovna Bekhtereva, director of the Scientific Research Institute of Experimental Medicine of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences, Leningrad; Genrikh Aviezerovich Borovik, chairman of the Soviet Committee for the Protection of Peace, Moscow; Aleksandr Ivanovich Golyakov, first deputy chairman of the All-Union Council of Veterans of War and Labor, Moscow; Dmitriy Sergeyevich Likhachev, sector chief of the Institute of Russian Literature of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Leningrad (Dmitriy Sergeyevich spoke here; you note him also as the chairman of the board of the Soviet Fund for Culture); Vladimir Petrovich Lukin, gas torch cutter of the V.V. Kuybyshev Kolomensk Steam Engine Construction Plant, Moscow Oblast; Oleg Metveyevich Nefedov, vice president of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow; Roald Zinnurovich Sagdeyev, leader of the Scientific Methods Center for Analytical Research of the Institute of Space Research of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow; Andrey Dmitriyevich Sakharov, head scientific associate of the P.N. Levedev Physics Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow; Valentina Ivanovna Fedotiva, editor in chief of the magazine SOVETSKAYA ZHENSHCHINA, Moscow; Elbar Nikolayevich Shengelaya, chairman of the Union of Cinematographers of Georgia, Tbilisi; Pavel Vadimovich Shetko, lecturer of the Department of Propaganda of the Minsk Obkom of the Komsomol of Belorussia. Of course, all members of the commission are deputies.

Those in favor of this composition of the commission I ask to prepare their mandates....

From the floor: (Inaudible).

R.N. Nishanov: Just one minute, I will give you the floor. Comrade Adamovich has an objection.

A.N. Adamovich, director of the All-Union Scientific Research Institute of Cinematography, Moscow (on behalf of the USSR Union of Cinematographers): The comrade general's speech might have sounded convincing to me as well were it not for the events in Minsk, where there were neither these slogans nor the demands from the division from Belorussia; there was nothing, but there was also gas and then the big lie. This is why I asked to withdraw the chairman of the commission that is being created, the esteemed Vladimir Vasilyevich Karpov, my immediate superior in the Union of Writers, and to withdraw his name from these considerations. We see how easily he gives in to emotions. The Georgian deputy spoke, and we applauded; the general spoke, and we applauded even more loudly. It is easy to get into emotions, and therefore the commission must be absolutely disinterested, absolutely objective.

Karpov cannot be such an objective figure, and these are the reasons why:

In the first place, he is a member of the Central Committee, and this means he will be directly subjected to pressure from those party figures who in one way or another are involved. He was a military person in the past, a person who has an especially loving attitude toward the military, and therefore he cannot be objective here either. I am not casting doubt on any of his human qualities. But I suggest as a candidate Daniil Aleksandrovich Granin.

R.N. Nishanov: Please, the floor is yours.

V.P. Tomkus, journalist, Vilnius (Panevezhskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Lithuanian SSR): Esteemed comrades! I appeal to you as members of the highest authority of the country. I ask you to put state affairs aside for just a minute and before creating this commission straighten out the things that are now being done in the country that are causing pain to the people.

The Lithuanian people were especially disturbed by the tragedy in Tbilisi. Here is why: The fact is that almost the same events almost took place last year in Lithuania, in Vilnius, in Gediminas Square. On 28 September internal forces and specialized divisions were sent in against defenseless people. Only at the last minute was a confrontation between the troops and the population averted, although there were those who suffered. I consider both these occurrences and the events in Tbilisi to be provocatory, and here is why: In Lithuania, before the unsanctioned rally, nowhere in the mass media was it announced that the rally was unsanctioned. The people could go to it, although the troops had been brought out. As we now know, permission to call out the specialized subdivisions was requested from Lithuania 2 days before the beginning of the event. So one can state that they had prepared for the event ahead of time.

Therefore I suggest:

1. Eliminate the members of the commission that was imposed on us "from above" and anonymously.

2. Create a commission which would include representatives of ethnic minorities.

3. Now, without waiting, discover and make public the guilty parties who gave the order to the troops. Otherwise, we are not insured against another tragedy!

R.N. Nishanov: Let us not discuss this issue for 2 days. Those who have objections to candidacies, please.

Yu.F. Karyakin, senior scientific associate of the International Labor Movement of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow (on behalf of the USSR Academy of Sciences): Two remarks—first, I wish to reject the candidacy of Borovik for the commission. Unlike Karpov, about whose conscientiousness I have no doubt, as is also true with Adamovich, I do have doubts about the conscientiousness of Borovik. He is one of the most dependent people I know. That is first. (Applause).

Second: I would be less than honest if I did not recall one story from 1968 when under similar conditions I heard with my own ears in the presence of witnesses how a person who had come to Moscow before August of 1968 said that he was sent to Czechoslovakia to print anti-Soviet leaflets. The Czechs will excuse me for not being able to say this at the time. I am raising the hypothesis of provocation. Everything R. Medvedev has discussed coincides too well. Everything coincides too well.

R.N. Nishanov: A proposal? Please.

Yu.R. Boyars, docent of P. Stuchka Latvian State University, Riga (Doverskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Latvian SSR): Esteemed deputies! I would suggest that you not be in such a hurry with the applause and be more vigilant, as we were advised by an antifascist writer whom we know very well. I must tell you, unfortunately, that at the same time it is possible that the same thing was being prepared in Latvia. Because it was precisely during those days that we received in the Presidium of the Latvian Soviet amendments to our constitution and election legislation. I must say that at that time the leadership of the People's Front was invited to a meeting with our generals. I was invited with them to this meeting. But when I arrived there or, rather, when I was on the way to the meeting, I saw armored personnel carriers on the streets of Riga. If there had been demonstrations or some kind of unrest in Riga at the time I think it is quite possible that something quite similar would have happened there. Therefore, comrades, I would like to ask Comrade Rodionov, first, whether he knows what international human rights are and how soldiers are supposed to deal with women and noncombatants, and whether he explained this to his soldiers before they went to suppress this conflict. This is a very important question, and I wish to receive an answer from him. Further, we request that the commission include a lawyer, since it does not include one now.

R.N. Nishanov: Please, Comrade Shengelaya.

E.N. Shengelaya, director and producer of the film studio Gruziyafilm, Tbilisi (on behalf of the USSR Union of Cinematographers): If you will recall, on the first day of the congress I suggested that you look at the videocassette which you will apparently see today. I am very sorry that you did not see this cassette before you began to discuss this matter. Because the documentary film could orient us very correctly. But you can do this today. But still I ask for you not to hurry, not to hurry with conclusions. I ask that we create a really serious commission today. Because with a competent commission, any lie, regardless of what it might, will be short-lived. The commission will study this problem in all directions and can report the real truth to you.

Yesterday when a legal question came up in the evening, Mikhail Sergeyevich called legal experts to the podium. This was logical, naturally, and correct. Therefore, it seems to me that the commission that is being created should include people not according to the principle we usually use—a worker, a female kolkhoz worker, a member of the intelligentsia, and so forth—but people who are professionally able to really figure all this out. Therefore, I suggest that this commission include Anatoliy Aleksandrovich Sovchak, Aleksandr Maksimovich Yakovlev....

From the floor: (Inaudible).

E.N. Shengelaya: If you, Comrade Yakovlev, cannot do it, then the commission should necessarily include a legal expert of the same rank as Yakovlev.

I suggest including on the commission Deputy Toltezhnikov, Larustin, and Ignatovich. It is very important that this commission include Yegor Vladimirovich Yakovlev and Boris Lvovich Vasilyev, who were in Tbilisi as late as 12 April and, as has been said, saw everything that happened with their own eyes.

Moreover, it seems to me that we should include on the commission several deputies from the Commission of the Georgian SSR Supreme Soviet who have worked for a month and already know all the details and can help the commission. These are Deputies Margvelashvili and Gankrelidze. Of course, I think that it would be very correct if this commission were headed by a member of the Politburo, CPSU Central Committee secretary Aleksandr Nikolayevich Yakovlev. (Applause).

This is important because some time ago, in February, also in a difficult and tense time, he was in Tbilisi and held a certain position, spoke on television, and his speech was received very well by all formal and informal groups throughout society. Therefore, it would be correct if he would agree to head this commission.

I would not be in a hurry with all kinds of emotions, because the people who were killed and suffered are reflected in the medical investigation report, and many materials will be turned over to the commission. The

commission should not wait until the next congress to report the truth to the Supreme Soviet and draw the political, moral, and ethical conclusions. This is important for all of us, for our children, for our families, and for our future. Thank you.

R.N. Nishanov: You are welcome.

From the floor: Give us the floor.

R.N. Nishanov: Yes, I will give you the floor now. Just a minute, comrades, everything is proceeding normally here.

From the floor: (Inaudible).

R.N. Nishanov: I wrote down your suggestion.

From the podium (the deputy did not introduce himself): Dear comrades, there are many candidates on the list for the commission to investigate the events in Tbilisi. But since great complaints will be made against military personnel, I suggest including on the commission Army General Govorov.

R.N. Nishanov: Comrade Lieutenant Colonel, wait please.

N.S. Petrushenko, lieutenant colonel, instructor in propaganda and agitation of the political provision of the military unit (Leningrad Territorial Electoral Okrug, Vostochno-Kazakhstanskaya Oblast): Esteemed Comrade Chairman! Esteemed comrade deputies! I signed up for a statement concerning the personnel on the commission as early as this morning, as soon as I received the proposed draft for the composition of the commission. I am very sorry and I apologized to the congress and the presidium for having to take a turn, that is, violate the order for which I myself voted and in support of which many deputies have spoken. But one recalls the words of Vladimir Ilich Lenin to the effect that there never has been and probably never will be a human search for the truth without human emotions.

Therefore, I have no doubt that the proposed composition of the commission selected from deputies with principles and competence consists of people capable of objectively studying all the circumstances of the tragic events. But they will not only have to give an answer, and a conclusion about what happened, but also suggest a package of recommendations intended to avoid such tragedies in the future. As a military person I cannot but see that, judging from the publications and speeches of General Rodionov, whom I know personally, who has received many reprimands from him but also many thanks, the tragic events were used to pound a wedge between the Army and the people. It is unpleasant for us to perform police functions ourselves. But we military people would not like to be reproached in the Hall of the Congresses for being people who are called upon to be constantly in a state of military readiness and sometimes, unfortunately, are late in preventing such tragedies. The dialectic of the development of democracy, unfortunately, is apparently such that it would be correct to include in the commission, taking into account the nature of the tasks it will have to carry out, also deputies who are military servicemen. It seems that in the Hall of Congresses we have no deputies who are representatives of the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs. If there are any, they should also be included on the commission, because in addition to the proposal from the deputies concerning the revocation of existing ukases that determine the utilization of MVD [Ministry of Internal Affairs] forces, there are also, to our misfortune and shame, objective conditions in which it is impossible to do without them, without special-purpose troops.

I would assume that it would be necessary to ask the presidium and you, comrade deputies, to include on the commission deputies who are military servicemen and specific army officers. For example, Colonel Martirosyan, who spoke here earlier, and Deputy Govorov. Taking into account the serious conclusions that have been confronted here, specifically in the speech yesterday by Roy Medvedev when discussing the candidacy of the first deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, I make this proposal: to include on the commission Deputy Miroshnik from Kazakhstan, who holds a position of chairman of the republic's State Security Committee. I think that since we entrust the holy of holies, state security, to these people, we should trust them to look with a competent and experienced eye at the holy of holies of those forces that have prepared this provocation. For I feel that this was a provocation with far-reaching goals.

Taking advantage of the forum of the congress and without waiting for the official investigation by the authorized deputy commission, I should like to make some serious accusations against Deputy Rodionov. The deputies have materials from the investigation of the Georgian tragedy and I would like to familiarize the deputies with the answer I received from the Ministry of Internal Affairs yesterday when, having become familiar with the materials of the Georgian incident, I sent a request to the Ministry of Internal Affairs to answer a basic question: why in the materials of the investigation does it indicate civilians who were killed and wounded but says nothing about the nature of the harm caused to our soldiers who performed military functions that we find undesirable. I would ask to have this document reproduced and distributed to all the deputies as an official response.

Esteemed deputies! I would ask for one minute for a procedural question. I assume that it would be expedient in all documents that are offered to us to indicate:

1. The okrug from which one deputy or another was elected. For it turns out that the commission proposed by the presidium was 90 percent representative of social

organizations which, in my opinion, is not altogether correct. I do not wish to cast a shadow on the esteemed deputies from the social organizations, but I would like for the presidium of our congress to indicate the electoral okrug, position, and, obviously, who recommended them. Because I personally do not think that we can agree with this procedure. The more so since certain members of this commission have already been in Tbilisi on private business as it were and this makes me doubt the expediency of this principle or method of forming our high-level commission. (Applause.)

R.N. Nishanov: The floor goes to Comrade Manayenkov.

Yu.A. Manayenkov, first secretary of the Lipetsk CPSU Obkom from the city of Lipetsk (Lebedyanskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Lipetsk Oblast): Esteemed comrades! I have just a couple of remarks about procedural issues. When our constituents sent us here to the Supreme Soviet, they gave us a mandate to conduct ourselves, in addition to everything else, objectively and morally with respect to one another. The comrade from Georgia whose film we shall see at 7 pm spoke here and said that the commission should include serious people. Well, excuse me please, since when are academicians Sakharov, Likhachev and Sagdeyev not serious people? It would be good for him to make apologies. I should also like to respond to Comrade Adamovich. We are free to express our opinion about each proposed candidate. But we must justify and substantiate this opinion. But Comrade Karpov is blamed because he is favorably disposed toward military personnel. After all, he is also a hero of the Soviet Union. If we blame him for this, what is left of our spiritual life? (Applause). In my opinion it is quite stupid to blame a person because he is a member of the CPSU Central Committee. (Applause).

I would like to say a little about the speech a couple of days ago by the historian and writer Roy Medvedev. He said that there is something wrong in the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, there is no unity. This is the sixth year I have been working as first secretary of the CPSU obkom. I am very frequently in the CPSU Central Committee. At least last year I spent 90 days there. I did not see and do not know of a case where there was anything wrong there. On the contrary, it is a very dynamic, very busy, and very charged atmosphere, an atmosphere of striving. Where do these insinuations come from? It is simple, in reality they are some kind of desire somehow to get rid of our highest political leadership. This, in my view, is unworthy. (Applause.)

R.N. Nishanov: Please, introduce yourself.

V.A. Voblikov, head of the organization section of the Baltysk CPSU Gorkom, Baltysk (Chernyakhovskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Kaliningrad Oblast): Comrade deputies, I would like to speak briefly about this. The fact is that we do not have experience in parliamentary work. Many deputies have come here with the struggle they have just been through and brought their rally agitation with them. But still we are working for the entire country. I think that this is fraught with serious circumstances. Because any ill-considered word that is cast out...if we have these kinds of emotions, I can imagine what is happening in Georgia now. Therefore I think that in the Parliament we should learn political work and should be objective. Of course it is impossible to search for the truth without emotions, as Lenin said. But on the other hand, we must build our statements on facts and arguments and, I repeat, they should be weighed, because we have responsibility, for the entire country and for the situation in it. I should like to direct this to the congress.

R.N. Nishanov: Deputy Dzhumber Ilich Patiashvili has the floor. Perhaps after Comrade Patiashvili's speech we shall consult about making a decision concerning the candidates?

I ask the rest of the comrades to sit down. Please sit down. We are discussing a serious problem, comrades. We are creating a commission. If somebody has to be replaced, let us replace him. Everything will be normal.

D.I. Patiashvili, Tbilisi (Tbilisi—Pervomaysk Electoral Okrug, Georgian SSR): Esteemed deputies! From this podium I shall tell all the available truth about the tragedy in Tbilisi. That which I know, since the comrades who are speaking here.... I do not wish to compare some to others now, but the situation that existed requires clarification so that we can know why this tragedy occurred. After what has happened, everyone is now wiser, everyone is second-guessing, and certain people are escaping responsibility, and certain others are coming forward, but this is not the main thing. The main thing is that a tragedy occurred which will remain a black spot in the history of Georgia and the country.

At the same time, I would like to tell the deputies the truth, that there were attempts to direct the investigation of events, some in one direction and some in another. The commissions worked and the union commission worked. Unfortunately, I do not know the decisions about the results but in principle all representatives of the ministries are trying to avoid responsibility. I personally did not and am not avoiding responsibility.

The first remark that was directed to me when I was no longer working as first secretary and was not even a remark but a great mistake, was that we entrusted the leadership of the operation to Commanding General Rodionov. Therefore I would like to say that the bureau of the Central Committee of the Republic Communist Party did not appoint him or instruct him to do this. This was done after Colonel General Rodionov personally, along with the USSR first deputy minister of defense, Army General Kochetov, came to the Central

Committee, came to my office and said that the leadership had been assigned to Rodionov. I knew that you would ask this question. Unfortunately, I did not ask that question at that time but I am asking that question today....

In reality, the events developed as follows: in the republic and specifically in Tbilisi, the situation was complicated. I informed the Central Committee about these problems and informed the secretaries of the Central Committee Comrade Razumovskiy and Comrade Chebrikov, I informed them that a difficult situation at an unsanctioned rally in Tbilisi had continued for several days already. But at the same time, in the Abkhaz Autonomous Republic, we also had a difficult situation related to the adoption of a decision by leaders of the autonomous republic to create a union republic and secede from Georgia. Therefore all forces we had in the capital and in Georgia were mobilized to Abkhaziya in order to prevent possible interethnic conflicts and, I would say, there was a danger of that.

On 7 April just at the beginning of the bureau meeting I received a call from the defense minister, Army General Yazov, and was told that in 15-20 minutes the first deputy minister, Army General Kochetov, would be arriving at the Central Committee—I didn't even know he was in the republic—along with Colonel General Rodionov who, according to our information, was in Armenia. On the 7th of April the former chairman of the republic KGB, Gumbaridze, told me that he had spoken with the center and that a detachment of KGB troops would be arriving in Tbilisi. In the bureau we discussed the situation with the military people and came to the decision that additional MVD forces would be needed in order to maintain order in the city and we reported this officially with a coded message to the CPSU Central Committee.

On the next day, 8 April, comrades Kochetov and Rodionov arrived and the latter stated that he had been put in charge of all the troops on the territory of Georgia. On the 8th of April there was a meeting of the republic party aktiv which General Rodionov discussed here, as well as of the Central Committee bureau and the Defense Council.

In his speech Mikhail Sergeyevich mentioned that there were such instructions or a phone call. Yes, there was a conversation with Comrade Shevardnadze. And regarding this question I should like to say that as concerns the arrival of Comrade Shevardnadze and Comrade Razhumovskiy, I considered their arrival inexpedient at that time because the situation had begun to stabilize. The only task was to free the square in front of the government house and, according to the assurances of the comrades, this task presented no special difficulties. When our aktiv discussed the decisions concerning the situation in the republic, a plan of measures was adopted to stabilize the situation in the republic, including measures, as I have said, to free the square in front of the government house using the militia, MVD troops, and subdivisions of the Transcaucasian Military District. And after this at the bureau we confirmed the commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, Colonel General Rodionov, as leader of the operation. Unfortunately, I repeat, it was on the morning of 8 April that Comrades Kochetov and Rodionov (they are here) came in and said that Rodionov had been placed in charge of leading the troops and that the bureau, after the meeting of the aktiv, they had approved a decision with two points: to free the square in front of the government house and to put Comrade Rodionov in charge.

Unfortunately, during the time of the meeting of the republic aktiv, as was mentioned here, the military drove armored personnel carriers to the square where the rally was being held. This action led to the opposite reaction, and during the night of 9 April, as we have said, there were several thousand people left on the square. At the bureau and in the Defense Council on 8 April.... I can give you the tape recording of the minutes here. Unfortunately, it has not been typed up because when the commission asks why all these documents have not been typed up one must say that nobody thought about the minutes at the time. There are recordings of the minutes that were taped by the general who is secretary of the Defense Council which include assurances that the square in front of the government house would be freed without causing any casualties, that is, the armed forces have only shields and nightsticks. I emphasize that that was stipulated at the beginning, that the troops, and not only the troops but also the militia and the MVD—should be armed only with shields and nightsticks.

After that, under the leadership of the commander, a plan was drawn up for an operation in conjunction with representatives of the USSR MVD who were in our republic. A half hour before the beginning of the operation the commander telephoned me from the square and reported that he was ready. And the information was that there were many people there. Igor Nikolayevich can confirm this and I asked then: "Perhaps the operation can be put off for a while?" He said firmly that he was on the spot and assured me that there would be no complications. To our great misfortune, instead of dispersal of the unsanctioned rally as they promised, the demonstrators were surrounded and beaten unmercifully. Instead of implementing the decision to free the square—and this is the main question, and those who were in Tbilisi know: the square was not large at all, but the main task was to free the square in front of the government house and the troops, unfortunately, after this chased the people throughout Rustaveli Prospekt. You will see this. And they broke into homes. Several people were killed near the Iveriya Hospital (it is located at a distance of 800 meters to 1 kilometer from the square) or sustained serious injuries. More than 3,000 people were poisoned. When at 3 am it was announced that two people had died, I went to the bureau—several members of the bureau are present here, they are deputies—and I turned in my resignation since I did not think

that I had the right to head the party organization any longer. At that time I did not suspect that entrenching tools and toxic chemicals were being used for otherwise, and I say this frankly and sincerely, I would certainly not have turned in my resignation. Perhaps, or probably after this, I would have had more of a punishment, but I would by no means have gone into retirement since all of this was a great trauma for every one of us. After this I had practically abandoned by position. But on 9 April comrades Shevardnadze and Razhumovskiy had already arrived....

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: Comrades, I will not be speaking here any more, and therefore you will agree that I have a couple of words left.

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: What character are you asking about?

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: I shall tell you about the consequences, about the rally, and you will see....

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: I am speaking specifically: When in the morning they announced that people had been killed and that entrenching tools had been used, Comrade Rodionov categorically denied it. He said that there were no entrenching tools and that they had not been used. Unfortunately, even after numbers of the Politburo arrived in the republic the comrades did not admit this. Only on the third day did they admit that entrenching tools had been used. And regarding gases—that was later, at the end of April. In order to obtain information about how you were informed, leading toxicologists from Moscow, Leningrad and foreign countries were invited.

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: I am saying that the rally that took place in our city is like rallies that take place here and everywhere. Therefore....

(Noise in the hall).

D.I. Patiashvili: Comrades, we are speaking about something else....

Voice from the floor: Why did you not address the people?... (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: I am explaining and I am speaking of my own guilt, because the bureau of the Central Committee and I personally did what we could and that which we could not do—for that I have been punished and I will be punished for my guilt. But, comrades, it is not the point that....

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

D.I. Patiashvili: Therefore I take personal responsibility, I take responsibility as first secretary. I do not blame anyone, I do not accuse anyone, I am saying that the operation was conducted incorrectly, that the information was incorrect, that in no case should entrenching tools have been used, in no case should there have been gases or chemical substances, this is what we are speaking about. (Noise in the hall).

Voices from the hall: (Inaudible).

R.N. Mishanov: Comrades, comrades, just a minute.

D.I. Patiashvili: Such is the tragic story.... (Noise in the hall).

It was incorrect what happened according to the program "Vremya," that the commander refused.... This was written and therefore our press does not always write the truth. In no case.... I am telling you directly, here they discussed that this was not work for the troops and therefore MVD troops were the ones that were used, and after that.... (Noise in the hall). I again say, as Comrade Rodionov said when speaking on television that he was.... (Noise in the hall).

R.N. Nishanov: Dzhumber Ilich, finish up, please....

D.I. Patiashvili: Such as the tragic history and it is impossible to determine the scope of immense political and moral....

Voice from the floor: I have a question. Where were you yourself during this time?

D.I. Patiashvili: At that time I was on the phone with the commander and was at home. (Noise in the hall). I have questions also, comrades. Specifically I would like to ask those who gave the order to use the entrenching tools and the toxic substances. You ask me. Right? Right. I agreed to this. But what decision was made about the degree of cruelty against the population?

R.N. Nishanov: Comrades, just a minute, attention. Here are the deputies—Comrade Vasilyev, Borovik, Dzasokhov, Ivanov, and many others are asking for the floor. Wait just a minute, I am still speaking. Just wait. I ask you to sit down. Sit down. (Applause). Sit down, please. Sit down. Get away. Well, that is bad.... Do not disgrace yourselves.... Go away. (Noise in the hall). Comrades, this suggestion was being made: Taking into account that we have heard many comrades and there

are many aspects that we have to figure out very attentively (the comrades have made many suggestions concerning candidates for the commission), therefore, if you have no objections, let us instruct the presidium, taking all of today's proposals into account, to think over the question of the composition of the commission during the night and tomorrow bring it up for voting. Do you agree? (Noise in the hall). Those in favor please raise your mandate. Lower them. Who is against? (Noise in the hall). So it is adopted. (Prolonged applause). Comrades, I ask everyone to calm down, sit down. Sit down please, we shall give you the opportunity to speak as well, everything here is proceeding normally, everything is proceeding normally.

So, comrades, we have already adopted the decree regarding this issue, give me a chance to play my role out to the end. Thank you dear comrades. (Commotion in the hall). We have made a decision regarding this issue. Now Mikhail Sergeyevich has the floor.

M.S. Gorbachev: Comrades! I do not think that we should oversimplify the issue. No. And I do not think that this is being done here. But even what we have heard now confirms previous intentions, namely, we must look into other things thoroughly and get to the bottom of things. The question is large, special, deep, political, and it pertains, as it were, to the very foundations of our country's existence. Therefore I, for example, informed you—and now I confirm this—and at the same time it was stated in the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee that it is necessary to get to the bottom of this. We now have materials in the procurator's office—it is conducting an investigation. There are the materials of the local republic commissions. There is Comrade Tarazevich's commission and it has gone to Tbilisi. Other comrades have also made trips. I must say that the picture is still very contradictory. In general, what led to this? Therefore I think we are on the correct path. We must not oversimplify and, I must say, the country is interested in this and the Georgian people are interested in this—they demand respect from us. Now we must not cast doubt on either the one or the other. We need the truth, we must get to the bottom of things regardless of what may be affected, and we must make decisions that will correspond to the truth. (Applause.)

Vladimir Vasilyevich (he addresses Deputy Karpov): There is no need to protect the others, we are having an exchange of opinions. I had begun to protect myself yesterday when for 2 hours I was deliberately worked over. But I thank the deputies because this proved that democracy exists in the congress. (Applause.) But this certainly does not mean that Gorbachev does not see, I see everything. (Laughter and applause in the hall.) And I am in favor of our being and working together and moving forward together.

Comrades! I also want you to devote a couple of minutes to this matter. I am returning to November of last year, to the eve of the session when we were making constitutional amendments. The situation in Georgia was very heated at that time.

I shall not hide anything. I know this republic and I have known these people for a long time. They know me. I love them and I hope that they have respect for me. When I heard that in November the leadership had begun to produce television programs expressing the opinion that a curfew was necessary in order to contain the situation, I told Comrade Shevardnadze directly that during the night he should quickly convey my appeal, an oral one, to the Georgian intelligentsia (they can now tell you whether this is true or not) and to the people that I asked to solve the problem and to remove the curfew. I said: I know that if we resort to this action in Georgia, we will insult the fighting Georgians who will never put up with anything like this. At that time that relieved the tension. I am very thankful that my words got to them. And by 4 am (also at 4 am, you understand) we took care of the problem. Therefore the idea of imposing order without doing everything in order to arrange contact, live communication and discussion of the problems appeared there in November. This is why I say that it is necessary to figure this out, comrades. The question is how we shall go on from here, how we shall conduct a dialogue in the country, how we shall preserve democracy, and how we shall maintain and protect this democracy—this very mean which is the only one in which a healthy person can live and feel like a human being. We have been proceeding toward this for so many decades.

Therefore I do not wish to oversimplify anything, the problem is very complex, and let us think about it as we agreed. I did not participate in forming the commission, but nonetheless I was consulted as to whether someone from the Politburo should be included on the commission. Today I named Comrade Yakovlev. If there are no objections, we could include both Yakovlev and whoever you want. This is your problem and you can solve it. If necessary, we can include Yakovlev and let him be in charge. We will discuss it and decide. There is no problem here. Therefore let us tell the people who are listening to us in the country and in Georgia that the congress was taking correct positions and is interested in the truth, and that the congress was given instructions which will provide for obtaining the truth and on the basis of this we shall draw conclusions which will dictate the results of this investigation. (Applause).

R.N. Nishanov: Comrades, Comrade Starodubtsev, whose speech we have announced, will speak tomorrow morning, and now I should like to consult briefly on a couple of questions.

First Comrade Gorbunov will make a brief announcement about the work of the presidium and the secretariat and certain proposals. Then a couple of more general questions and with this we shall probably complete our work for today.

Voice from the floor: (Inaudible).

M.S. Gorbachev: We will give you the floor tomorrow, Vladimir Vasilyevich. (He turns to Karpov).

R.N. Nishanov: We will give you the floor tomorrow, Vladimir Vasilyevich. Please, Comrade Gorbunov. While Comrade Gorbunov is coming up, comrades, we asked members of the counting commission to go into Georgiyevskiy Hall in the large Kremlin Palace.

A.V. Gorbunov, chairman of the Presidium of the Latvian SSR Supreme Soviet, Riga (Tsesisskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Latvian SSR): Esteemed comrade deputies! Unfortunately, I am not able to speak very briefly. But I sense the mood of the hall and perhaps we can arrange it so that the report on our work and its directions, how we are carrying out your wishes that you expressed can be printed and distributed to everyone tomorrow morning? Or I need 15 minutes. Tomorrow, yes? Good.

R.N. Nishanov: Now, comrades, we have again decided to speak about the commissions, and we shall take another 5 minutes. All the deputies have been given material regarding the formation.... Vladimir Vasilyevich (he turns to Karpov), I have told you several times: we will give you the floor tomorrow. Do you not agree? But none of the rest of them have had the floor either. Why do you claim a special role?

M.S. Gorbachev: We have already agreed to give you the floor tomorrow.

R.N. Nishanov: We have agreed, tomorrow we will give you the floor.

V.V. Karpov, writer, first secretary of the Board of the USSR Union of Writers, Moscow (from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union): This is what I want to say for tomorrow. In the morning, like all of you I received this list. I did not know anything and received a draft of the composition of the commission. Here certain duties were already to be assigned to me and I, of course, was thinking about what to do and how to do it. Regardless of whether or not I am the chairman or a member of the commission, I wish to suggest two points so that they will be taken into account when preparing the decree, this is a very serious matter. It is necessary for this decree to include not only the list of members of the commission, but also the point that the commission has the right to become familiar with all documents pertaining to the incident in the KGB [Commission for State Security], MVD, Ministry of Defense, CPSU Central Committee, and the staff of the Supreme Soviet, and all these documents should be turned over. (Applause).

It was said here that I am a member of the Central Committee. I anticipated this. The commission should report the results of the work not the Central Committee but to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, and at joint meetings of the Council of the Union of Supreme Soviets and the Council of Nationalities so that nobody will exert influence on them beforehand.

I should also add that the commissions should include the metropolitan of Leningrad Aleksiy, since questions related to religious affairs will also be involved. I have spoken with him and he has agreed. That is all, and I withdraw my candidacy; Comrade Yakovlev, a member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, should be chairman.

G.A. Borovik, writer, political observer of the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting, chairman of the Soviet Committee for the Protection of Peace, Moscow (from the Movement for Peace, the Combined Soviet Committee for the Protection of Peace in conjunction with the Association for Contributing to UN Organizations in the USSR): I took the floor to make a correction, comrades! I understand that the small amount of vituperation that has been expressed at this podium is nothing in comparison to the immense disaster that took place in Tbilisi. But I still wish to say that there is a relationship between man and his own convictions, his group, and his vanity. I depend on my own convictions. I think that my transmissions, say, concerning Karabakh, might not be without shortcomings but this hardly proves that anybody gave me any instructions as to how to do them.

Second. Recently I have been under fire, both from right-wing organizations like Pamyat and our extreme left-wing comrades. This confirms the idea that the extreme left and the extreme right join together and nurture one another.

Third. The comrade who spoke about me here and spoke with me saying that I had something to do with the provocations in Czechoslovakia, and that certain of my comrades, to my amazement, understood that I was in Czechoslovakia and was distributing inflammatory leaflets. Did they understand this? (Noise in the hall.) That is a plain lie! I was first in Czechoslovakia 2 years ago and at that time—in 1968—I was on a business trip in the United States, working for the press agency Novosti, and this can be verified from my articles. And the last reason I took the floor: I request that you do not let the congress podium be used for settling personal accounts, and we do have personal differences and insults. (Applause.)

R.N. Nishanov: Dear comrades! We are taking the information given by deputies Borovik and Karpov under advisement and the commission and presidium will take it into account. But at the end of the meeting I should also like to say something about the last words of Comrade Borovik: Let us never use this high tribune, this responsible tribune, for any mutual attacks or insults. We are being heard by millions of people and they expect from us the most reasonable words in order to solve our crucial problems.

Since we have devoted this evening to our commission, materials regarding the second commission have been distributed to the deputies—the Commission of the

Congress of People's Deputies for verifying the materials related to the activity of the investigatory group of the USSR Procurator's Office headed by Gdlyan.

Just a minute, just a minute, let me finish what I have to say and then you can stand up. Sit down, I will give you the floor in just a minute, allow me to finish what I have to say.

Since many comrades have been invited here and people are hearing and seeing us throughout the country, I would like to read out the composition of the commission. But before reading it I would like to obtain from the deputies agreement for the following change in this list.

For personal reasons People's Deputy Comrade Zenskova wishes not to be included on this commission. She is nursing a child and it is difficult for her to get away for very long. Therefore the deputies suggest replacing Comrade Zenskova on the commission with Deputy Sergey Nikolayevich Zvonov, director of the Ivanovo Passenger Transportation Enterprise, a law student. With this change I would like to read this list. And after I read the list, if anybody has any objections or additions, they may express them briefly without long speeches. Do you have a suggestion concerning the list, Comrade Vasilyev?

From the floor: (Inaudible).

R.N. Nishanov: Just a moment, I will read the list and then you can withdraw your name. All right?

The decree of the USSR Congress of People's Deputies concerning the formation of a commission for verifying materials related to the activity of the investigatory group of the USSR Procurator's Office headed by Telman Khorenovich Gdlyan.

The USSR Congress of People's Deputies hereby decrees:

In order to verify the materials related to the activity of the investigatory group of the USSR Procurator's Office headed by Telman Khorenovich Gdlyan, to form a commission consisting of the following USSR people's deputies (I shall read them first since the material has been distributed and then we will hear withdrawals): Boris Lvovich Vasilyev, chairman of the commission, movie dramatist, the city of Moscow.

Members of the commission: deputies Valeriy Grigoryevich Aleksandrin, chairman of the Yoshkar-Ola city people's court, Mary ASSR; Ilmar Olgertovich Bisher, professor at the Latvian State University imeni P. Stuchka; Yuriy Vladimirovich Golik, dean of the law faculty of Kemerovo State University (we agreed that he would replace Comrade Zemskova); Dzhangir Ali Abbas Ogly Kerimov, department head of the Academy of Social Sciences under the CPSU Central Committee; Vladimir Nikolayevich Kudryavetsev, vice president of the USSR Academy of Sciences; Vitaliy Aleksandrovich Semenov, senior scientific associate of the Institute of Technical Mechanics of the Ukrainian SSR Academy of Sciences; Igor Viktorovich Sorokin, senior operative for criminal investigations of the line militia division, Kuybyshev Oblast; Viktor Nikolayevich Shorokhov, chief of the Tula Machine-Building Plant imeni V.M. Ryabikov; Erkin Yusupovich Yusupov, vice president of the Uzbek SSR Academy of Sciences; Aleksandr Maksimovich Yakovlev, sector chief of the Institute of State and Law of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow; Veniamin Aleksandrovich Yarin, operator of the Nizhniy Tagil Metallurgical Combine imeni V.I. Lenin, Sverdlovsk Oblast.

Now, Comrade Vasilyev, go ahead. The presidium has certain other withdrawals, and I will read them later. Go ahead, Comrade Vasilyev.

B.L. Vasilyev, movie dramatist, Moscow (from the USSR Union of Cinematographers): Comrade deputies! I thank you for the high honor conferred on me by the fact that you included me as the chairman of such a responsible commission. But for a month and a half now I have been feeling like a person with a guilty conscience. If I may express it this way, somewhat figuratively, I feel like my conscience took a blow from a nightstick in Tbilisi. It hit me hard. I do not know how I have stayed alive for 65 years. It was not my wish to be in Tbilisi—I was sent there by a collective who selected me. I know the Tbilisi material, I have spoken with a large number of people and also I was with a group of deputies—also not at my own request—in the MVD division whose regiment participated in the MVD division whose regiment participated in the events in Tbilisi. Moreover, I am a movie dramatist and also a writer and commentator. The subject of Tbilisi has become a painful one for me and for my creative work. Regardless of whether or not you include me on the commission to investigate the Tbilisi incident I will still work at this subject as a commentator. I ask you very sincerely to exclude me from the commission on questions related to comrades Gdlyan and Ivanov and to include me on the commission concerning the Tbilisi affair. Thank you. (Applause.)

R.N. Nishanov: Good, I think that is a reasonable request. We will keep this in mind upon final consideration. Are there any other requests? Now I shall give you the floor. For the record, there are other withdrawals, I shall announce them and then give you the floor. So, deputies Kudryavtsev, Kerimov, and Yakovlev have asked not to be included on the commission since they already worked on the preceding commission and have expressed their opinion regarding this issue. I think we can grant their request.

Therefore we might ask the following deputies to be included on the commission. Comrades Konstantin Dmitriyevich Lubenchenko, docent of the Law School of Moscow State University; Comrade Roy Aleksandrovich Medvedev, writer, historian, commentator, you know

him because he has spoken; Comrade Anatoliy Aleksandrovich Sobchak, department head, who has also spoken and you know him well. The Estonian comrades nominate: Comrade Vello Paulovich Pokhla, a member of the editorial board of ESTONSKIY TELEFILM.

Go ahead, you have the floor.

N.V. Karlov, first founding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences, rector of the Moscow Physics-Technical Institute, Moscow (from the USSR Academy of Sciences): I have a suggestion: As this issue includes also the ethical-moral issue, I ask the esteemed and worthy clergy who are among us to participate in the work of this commission. I cannot, I do not have the right simply to suggest specific names and physicians corresponding to these names, but I ask that when the commission is being formed you take into account the idea that the clergy be included: both the Orthodox hierarchy and worthy representatives of the Muslim religion, and possibly the Georgian patriarch and the Armenian Catholicos. And not only people's deputies. And not only people's deputies. This is my proposal.

V.V. Krychkov, deputy production chief of the Dzerzhinsk Kaprolaktam Production Association, Dzerzhinsk (Dzerzhinsk Territorial Electoral Okrug, Gorkiy Oblast): Comrades, I have a suggestion to augment the text of the name of the commission with this point: "For the Formation of the Commission to Verify Materials Related to the Activity of the Investigatory Group of the USSR Procurator's Office Headed by Comrade Gdlyan and Verification of the Statements of Comrades Gdlyan and Ivanov." The fact is that Gdlyan and Ivanov have made statements which have affected workers of the Central Committee and Moscow and it is necessary in addition to checking on their activity, to check on their statements.

In this connection I suggest expanding the commission, because the 13 people who are represented here are quite inadequate to encompass the second issue, the more so since this issue is very significant. We have already suggested Comrade Sobchak. I suggest also Comrade Strukov from Kursk, who spoke very well yesterday. And in relation to this I would then like to hear from the presidium the principles of the formation of the commission, that is, what it proceeds from in forming the commission. This has not been addressed in the delegation. Here there are some lawyers and some other people, and four people from Moscow, but now the composition has changed somewhat. I do not know how it will be formed. Further, I suggest removing Comrade Kudryavtsev....

From the floor: Comrade Kudryavtsev has removed himself.

V.V. Kryzhkov: He has? That is all, I withdraw my suggestion. Thank you for your attention.

R.N. Nishanov: Just a minute, I will answer a small question. First, the presidium has no preconceived ideas or preliminary considerations of any kind. When forming the commission they simply proceeded from the idea that this group should have a majority of lawyers, since they can figure things out while in the first group there were more political figures. We are now exchanging opinions. We are not suggesting a vote. The exchange of opinions is in progress. Whoever you want can be removed.

Wait just a minute, please, Telman Khorenovich Gdlyan is asking for the floor, and then I will give all three the floor, Andrey Dmitriyevich also.

T. Kh. Gdlyan, senior investigator for especially important cases under the USSR Procurator General, Moscow (Tusha Territorial Electoral Okrug, Moscow): Comrades, why did I come up here myself to speak? Because we are complicating our lives, which are complicated to begin with. Because, probably, the apparatus principle is manifesting itself in us and is prevailing. Pay attention—we are creating two commissions: there are difficulties both here and there. And what are they? They are elementary. These questions, you will understand, are very difficult to resolve. We must create a certain working group, say, with the same presidium of the congress. But the only thing that we had to do was create one, say, for the "Georgian question." You will recall that I got up and spoke at that time: according to the jury principle so that there would be confidence. We asked our Georgian comrade such-and-such. And that was all. We read the list so that everyone could confirm it.

The same thing here. We would discuss and coordinate these issues and the presidium would present the composition of the commissions. Otherwise we will never reach a conclusion, you understand, without endless talking. Dozens of more people could speak, each differently. There is (just a moment!) a specific point, there is a specific point, comrades. How do we figure out what is what? I am very well aware (I do not know who said it, maybe Comrade Karpov said it) of the suggestion that, comrades, it is necessary to include in the decree: all KGB documents, party, militia, procurator, and so forth and so on—on the table. How can we figure it out if there are no documents?

Here, naturally, we must change the formulation because it turns out that we are speaking about Gdlyan and Ivanov. But we were supposed to be speaking about the materials of the criminal case pertaining to the criminal activity not only of those who have been brought up here today but also those who have violated the law recently. This is what we were talking about. Therefore I would ask you, comrades, to close the discussion now. Because we will never get anywhere this way. Then, in conjunction with the comrades from the presidium, we should

discuss and coordinate the list, present it and confirm it so as not to lose time. This is reasonable. This is what I wanted to ask. I ask you to accept this suggestion. Thank you.

R.N. Nishanov: A small explanation. First, the presidium has followed the congress's instruction. The congress adopted a decision that the presidium should make a proposal regarding this issue. Therefore there is no independence here, we are following the will of the congress.

M.S. Gorbachev: Let the comrades introduce the proposals.

R.N. Nishanov: Please, introduce whatever proposals you have, please.

A.A. Zakharov, team leader of the comprehensive brigade of finishers of Construction Administration No 15 of the Sverdlovskiy Domostroitelnyy Kombinat imeni 60-Letiye Soyuza SSR Association, Sverdlovsk (Kirov Territorial Electoral Okrug, Sverdlovsk Oblast): On behalf of the initiative group composed of congress deputies, we suggest adding the following comrades to the list: Oleg Petrovich Borodin, staff correspondent of the newspaper IZVESTIYA for the Yakut ASSR; Viktor Nikolayevich Kiselev, engineer of the organizational-legal division of the Fishing Kolkhoz imeni V. I. Lenin, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy; Vladimir Dmitriyevich Yudin, chief of the Central Geochemical Expedition in the village of Khasyn; Vitaliy Valentinovich Guliy, special correspondent of the newspaper SOVETSKIY SAKHALIN; Igor Viktorovich Sorokin, senior operative for criminal investigation, Kuybyshev; Boris Vladimirovich Miroshin, chairman of the Sovetskiy Rayispolkom [Rayon Executive Committee], Orsk; Makar Makarovich Yakovlev, chief of the investigation section of the procurator of the Yakut ASSR, Yakutsk; Leonid Sergeyevich Kudrin, loader for one-ton labor agreements, former people's judge, Sverdlovsk; Ilya Iosifovich Zaslavskiy, Moscow Group of Deputies; Vladimir Aleksandrovich Norikhin, radio equipment adjuster, Vladimir. Thank you for your attention.

R.N. Nishanov: All right, Andrey Dmitriyevich, go ahead.

A.D. Sakharov, academician, head scientific associate of the Physics Institute imeni P.M. Lebedev of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow (from the USSR Academy of Sciences): My task has been simplified a great deal because of the preceding speech. The fact is that I wanted to speak in support of this list. In particular, I think that Comrade Kudrin is a person who could be recommended for heading this commission because of his biography and because of the fact that he is at the same time a lawyer and a representative of our country's working class. This is a very rare combination and it is of immense psychological significance. The fact is that the Gdlyan affair is an affair that has two sides. It is not only an investigation of the activity of this investigatory group, in which it is quite possible that there were serious violations. It is also an investigation of the accusations that have been cast at high levels of our apparatus, our society, and in order to restore confidence in our country it is extremely important for both sides of this conflict to be simultaneously and objectively investigated. And a person with the kind of biography that Comrade Kudrin has, it seems to me, is suitable to head such a responsible political commission. It is actually a political commission. And the country is awaiting the conclusions of this commission. I was at two rallies where 100,000 people were demanding an investigation. And we are meeting these demands, the demands of the people.

N.N. Poltoranin, political observer of the Novosti Press Agency, Moscow (from the USSR Union of Journalists): People have said here that the matter which we are discussing requires principled people. But yesterday evening Comrade Aleksey Ivanovich Kazannik from Omsk demonstrated how principled he is. You will recall that he withdrew his candidacy. I nominate Aleksey Ivanovich Kazannik to be included in the commission.

T.D. Moshnyaga, head physician of the republic clinical hospital, Kishinev (Kishinevskiy-Leninskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Moldavian SSR): I suggest including on the commission for investigating the events that took place in Tbilisi a medical expert, a professor of medicine and department head of the Kishinev Medical Institute, Deputy Georgiy Petrovich Gidirin.

A.G. Mukhtarov, editor of the republic newspaper KISHLOK KHAKIKATI ("Rural Truth"), Uzbek SSR (from the USSR Union of Journalists): First of all, forgive me, I have advice for Academician Andrey Dmitriyevich Sakharov. These questions should not be considered in rallies in Luzhniki; Academician Sakharov should visit Uzbekistan and learn about the real state of affairs there, and then make his suggestions. (Applause).

The question, comrades, is very serious. It pertains to the entire republic, the large union multinational republic. Therefore I ask the presidium: the commission should be objective, authoritative, competent, multinational, and multiprofile. It should include lawyers, party workers, and representatives of other categories and segments of the population. I suggest rejecting the proposal of the comrade who read the long list of candidates. It includes several of my journalist colleagues. I ask that journalists not be included in it because comrades Gdlyan and Ivanov are very cozy with my dear colleagues from Moscow. (Applause). I suggest including on the commission a deputy from Kazakhstan, Olzhas Suleymenov. (Applause).

R.N. Nishanov: Please. Next you, Yevgeniy Maksimovich.

A.D. Belina, teacher at the Ytyk-Kyuel Secondary School, Yakut ASSR (Megino-Kangalasskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug): I received a telegram from my constituents and submitted it to the secretariat but it has not read it, apparently it is lost somewhere. Therefore I must come up to this podium and express my will. The voters sent me a telegram and asked that I convey to the congress that this commission absolutely must include Makar Makarovich Yakovlev, incidentally, for some reason he ended up on the list, but that is good. Makar Makorovich Yakovlev is a lawyer by education and he received the absolute majority of the votes at the elections. In general he received a large number of votes throughout Yakutiya. So I think that he can be trusted. I ask you to take this into account.

R.N. Nishanov: The floor goes to Deputy Yevgeniy Maksimovich Primanov.

Ye.M. Primakov, director of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow (from the Communist Party of the Soviet Union): Comrades, I think that during the time of the work of the commission, both of them, we should not speak from the podium regarding the essence of their work. I think that when a question of the commission is discussed there should be no speeches about what they are working on. Let the commission do its work. I suggest that the presidium simply stop any speeches from this podium regarding the essence of the questions during the whole time the commissions are working.

R.N. Nishanov: I request that the speakers follow the suggestion of Deputy Ye.Me. Primakov. Make your suggestions and in the meantime we will form the commission. Introduce yourself, please.

A.A. Sidorov, pensioner, RSFSR, Sverdlovsk (from the All-Union Organization of Veterans of War and Labor): Perhaps this will not make me look very good, but I consider it my duty and responsibility to reject in front of all present the proposal to choose Comrade Kudrin as part of this commission. Not to mention its chairman. Apparently I do not have the right to say anything bad against this comrade. The voters have shown high confidence in him by electing him a people's deputy, but in any case it would be wrong to link him to the business we are now discussing. Comrade Kudrin is a young person and has completed two educational institutions, including the law institute. But he has not been a people's judge for a very long time. His popularity today is associated with his investigation of the business of rallies. You know that it has been reported in the press that injustice was done to him. There is that fact, but there is also another. In one case the press reported that he was right and in another that he was wrong. I assume that in this case he exchanged his principles for his legal knowledge. He threw away his party card and voluntarily left legal work. Now he works as a loader. I assume that this is his.... Again, I stipulate that I do not want to characterize him as an unworthy person, but in questions related to these legal affairs it would be wrong to include him on the commission. Moreover, he is like the offended party....

Again, comrades, I say that there was an offense against him. Is it possible for a person with such qualities to make such a correct decision about such a complicated issue? I suggest that he not be included on the commission. (Applause).

Yu.Yu. Olekaf, senior scientific associate of the Laboratory for Problem Microsurgery of Vilnius State University, Vilnius (Vilkavishkskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Lithuanian SSR): On behalf of the Lithuanian delegation I suggest including on the commission to verify the materials related to the activity of the investigatory group Egidiyus Vitautovich Bichkhauskas, investigator for especially important cases of the Lithuanian SSR Procurator's Office.

R.K. Odzhiyev, deputy chairman of the Cooperative Association Internatsionalist, Tajik SSR, Dushanbe (from the All-Union Lenin Communist Youth League): Comrades, quiet please. I am the only person who is not involved either in the party or in Soviet power or in state institutions, I am a cooperator. (Laughter in the hall).I see that you have relaxed a little bit. We understand all the responsibility of the matter under discussion here; I have in mind what took place in Tbilisi, and we understand all the responsibility to the internationalist servicemen, I myself am an internationalist serviceman. Now we understand all the responsibility to such a force of modernity, as it were, as cooperation. I ask you to include me on this list and I announce at this high tribune that my participation on this commission will be useful.

R.N. Nishanov: Now you, please.

G.Z. Koshlakov, first deputy chairman of the Tajik SSR Council of Ministers, Dushanbe (Rushanskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Tajik SSR): Although we were asked not to speak about the essence of the issue here, I should still like to respond to Comrade Gdlyan and that will be it. Forgive me. Comrade Gdlyan, who spoke first from this podium, said that today in the press there was an unprecedented campaign for persecuting his brigade. One might just as well say that during the course of the investigation there was an unprecedented campaign of support for a still-undecided criminal case. Before the trial dozens of people were declared criminal. And therefore today, when the press is speaking in the opposite direction, it is necessary to investigate the actions of the Gdlyan brigade itself. And if no violations of the law are found in its actions, then it is possible to go on, but if they confirm what appeared on the pages of the press today, the conclusions should be simple.

V.A. Shapovalenko, laboratory chief of the Volga-Ural Scientific Research and Planning Institute for Extraction and Processing of Hydrogen Sulfide Gases of the Orenburggazprom Production Association, Orenburg (Orenburg City Territorial Electoral Okrug, RSFSR): I just want to suggest a candidate, who for some reason has not appeared on this list, who prepared for the presidium. Just yesterday we were consulting and suggested a lawyer from Orenburg Oblast who was given a mandate from his constituents and the Muscovites who have addressed him here today. I have in mind Boris Vladimirovich Miroshin. He is a lawyer by education and has spoken here. I suggest including his name on the Gdlyan commission. At the same time I cannot but respond to the comrades. There has already been an attack here and nobody knows who is getting the upper hand. Representatives from Uzbekistan invite us: come and see what Sakharov has done. You say that it is different from what appeared in the press. Well, what was it then? Was it not Gdlyan who brought in those millions of rubles that were shown to us throughout the entire country? Or was it Gdlyan who hid them away? No! We must figure out once and for all who is guilty. Where did this money come from, and what next? (Applause).

R.N. Nishanov: Comrades! We must figure all this out as deeply as possible and give everyone a turn. All the scoundrels must get what they deserve. That is clear.

G.N. Kurochka, chairman of the Permanent Session of the Komi ASSR Supreme Court, Vorkuta (Vorkuta National Territorial Electoral Okrug, Komi ASSR): I have requested that you include me on the list of candidates for USSR Supreme Soviet. My proposal was not accepted at that time. Now I wish to propose my candidacy for the commission for verification of the materials related to the activity of the investigatory group of the USSR Procurator's Office headed by T.Kh. Gdlyan. I shall briefly explain why. I do not know what guided the presidium when discussing candidacies, but if we want to look at this matter objectively and establish whether the investigation went correctly or not, which violations were procedural and which were violations of criminal legislation by this group, if there were none, then I can do the best job of figuring this out—I have been a judge for 12 years and a member of the Komy ASSR Supreme Court. You can find out about my business qualities and qualifications in 15 minutes by telephoning the RSFSR Ministry of Justice or the RSFSR Supreme Court (activity in the hall.) They will tell you about my qualifications and my business qualities. I ask that you include me on the commission.

R.N. Nishanov: Just a minute of your attention, Comrade Kazannik. I will give you the floor later. Deputy Ryabchenko, please.

S.M. Ryabchenko, laboratory chief of the Institute of Physics of the Ukrainian SSR Academy of Sciences, Kiev (Moskovskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug, Kiev, Ukrainian SSR: I wish again to express complaints against the secretariat of our congress and our attention to the fact that we, having saved time at the beginning with procedural issues, are now losing it again. You understand, comrades, that if we all come up to the podium with our suggestions and discuss everything in front of the entire congress we will never get anywhere. When the question was raised about creating these commissions, our Ukrainian delegation gathered at 9:45 on Sunday—75 percent of the deputies were present—and discussed the possible candidates, voted for them, and as a result nominated two candidates: Comrade Andronati to the commission for investigating the events in Tbilisi, and Comrade Semenov—for the other commission. We submitted these candidacies to the presidium. I do not think that each delegation absolutely must achieve such a unity. There can be proposals from individual groups and individual deputies as well. But they should be submitted to the secretariat, and the secretariat should bring them up for discussion and then we should vote. This is a 5-minute matter and we have already spent an entire hour on it. Therefore I suggest: send all suggestions to the secretariat with the justification so that it can be shown who is recommended by the delegation, who is nominating himself and on what basis. They will read this list to us or distribute it in printed form, and then we can vote. Otherwise we will never get through.

R.N. Nishanov: Deputy Kazannik, please.

A.N. Kazannik, department docent of Omsk State University, Omsk (Omskiy National Territorial Electoral Okrug, RSFSR): Esteemed comrade deputies: You may not have any doubt that I am objective and dispassionate, but still I perceive from the principle that "a cobbler mends shoes and a pie baker bakes pies." And there are various kinds of lawyers. I am a specialist in economic law and I can do very, very little for this commission. It should include specialists in criminal law and procedure, and especially in criminology. If one looks attentively at the list of USSR people's deputies, I think that from the body of deputies one can form such a highly qualified commission. You have no idea what a case this is. It has been going on for more than 6 years. This is an extremely immense mass of documents. And I think that it is necessary to form a good working commission and give it the opportunity to enlist on its own initiative highly skilled specialists regardless of where they may work, for otherwise we may never get out of this situation. And, of course, Comrade Gdlyan should act according to principle here as he said with a "trial by jury." If people suggested for the commission seem suspicious to him, we should give him the right to have them withdrawn so that it will be completely dispassionate. Thank you, comrades.

R.N. Nishanov: Introduce yourself, please.

A.O. Dobrovolskiy, engineer-designer of the Design Bureau for Precision Electronic Machine Building, Minsk (Minkiy-Leninskiy Territorial Electoral Okrug,

BSSR): I shall be so bold as to suggest a candidate not in writing but from this podium, because I have written regarding this issue, but, unfortunately, had to wait in line. You yourself can see how difficult it sometimes is to get the floor.

Fulfilling the mandate of the voters, I would nominate Nikolay Ivanovich Ignatovich. He is known in Belorussia as an honest and principled person and, moreover, his high qualifications—senior justice adviser—enable him to delve seriously and deeply into the essence of the matter. Thank you.

R.N. Nishanov: Deputy Eshpay has the floor. If possible let us end here. Just a minute, we will consult now.

A.Ya. Eshpay, composer, secretary of the board of the USSR Union of Composers, Moscow (from the USSR Union of Composers): Vladimir Vasilyevich Karpov, a most courageous and honest person, has declined to be included on the commission. You know that 2 centuries ago there existed an Institution of Satisfaction when an indiscreet, not to mention insulting word, could cause a person to lose his life. There was such an institution, which has now been lost. Therefore people think that it is possible to say whatever they want. Having reacted to what was said, Vladimir Vasilyevich Karpov withdrew his name. I think that since he has remarkable human qualities and experience he can bring a great deal to the activity of such an important and serious commission for an issue which bothers our entire community and all of our people, such as the question of the events in Georgia. Then, it seems to me, this is the first issue and I want us to ask Vladimir Vasilyevich to remain on the commission. And I also heartily support the candidacy of Professor Yakovlev. We have already heard here from the deputies representing Georgia itself that this person has authority throughout the country. And the fact that Professor Yakovlev has already been in Georgia means that he is familiar with these affairs. He has a great deal of authority in the republic. I think it is extremely reasonable to include him on the commission.

R.N. Nishanov: Just a minute, comrades. Shall we stop? Yes? No? That is it, we have decided. Comrades! Just a couple of more notes. Comrade Kim nominates Comrade Sergey Sergeyevich Alekseyev and Comrade Avdeyev dominates Comrade Isul Gamzatov if Rasul agrees. Regarding Comrade Vichkauskas, we already have a proposal. Regarding the candidacy of Comrade Kurochkin, who nominated himself, a note has come. I shall read it later. Regarding Comrade Pokhol, we have already decided. Thus all the nominations made by people's deputies have been registered. The presidium will study the nominations and then present a draft for your consideration.

The counting commission will now have to do its work. I give the floor to the chairman of the counting commission, Comrade Yuriy Andreyevich Osipyan.

Yu.A. Osipyan: Comrade deputies! The counting commission, having gathered at its regular meeting, approved the form of the ballot for voting for candidates for the Council of Nationalities of the USSR Supreme Soviet from Nagornyy Karabakh. Reform of the ballot is this. There will be a ballot, I will not read the heading. You will see it. It has three names in alphabetical order. These are the names of the people's deputies Balayan, Dzhaforov, and Pogoyan. Right here on the ballot it is written that two deputies are to be selected out of the three. This will not mean that a ballot will be declared invalid if two candidates are not left. You can vote arbitrarily, and the two elected candidates are determined as a result of counting the votes.

The voting will take place the way it did with the election of the chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet. I emphasize that it was possible to cross out or leave the names of the candidates only while in the booth. Voting outside the booth where there are ballots with a large number of candidates is not allowed this time. It is necessary to go into the booth, cross out or leave the necessary names, and then go and put the ballot in the box. Actually, this is all.

Now we can begin the voting. But I ask another minute of your attention. When publishing the results of the voting in the newspaper IZVESTIYA and also with the next ballot you will receive, unfortunately, there are some typographical errors and mistakes. Next to the names of the candidates it is not clear (there are several cases of this) how many votes were "for," particularly for Deputy Rakhimov from Tajikistan, who came up to me almost in tears because he had received more than 1900 votes and there it was indicated 1200. And this was published in the republic newspaper. Do you understand? Therefore I wish to say that the only precise document is the record from the counting commission.

If you wish, tomorrow morning it will be possible to indicate these mistakes. If not, I assure you that all the deputies were elected by a considerable majority of the votes. No more than 300 were against. We can make a correction if that is your decision. All the figures are indicated correctly on the ballot. There is a difference between the ballot which the counting commission published and the material published in the press.

R.N. Nishanov: Comrades! Are there questions for the chairman of the counting commission? No.

Yu.A. Osipyan: All the ballots with the established form are valid. I wish to explain one other thing: if candidates are included on the ballot for a single vacancy, then it is possible to declare the ballot invalid if more than one name has been left. In all cases where candidates are included for several vacancies (more than one as was the case with the elections to the Supreme Soviet) all ballots with the established form will be valid regardless of how many names are left. When will the results of the voting be announced?

R.N. Nishanov: We shall probably announce the results of the voting tomorrow morning. Thank you, Yuriy Andreyevich. Now a couple of small announcements. Regarding the first issue, the commissions, we have completed our work. But later four notes came in with which I should like to familiarize you. Comrade Borovkov, the deputy from Leningrad, suggests including on the commission we discussed last Comrade Varanov from the Izhorsk Plant. The delegation from the Komi ASSR asked not to accept the self-nomination of Kurochka for this commission. The delegation from the Ukrainian SSR suggests including Academician Andronata on the commission. On the commission for considering the events in Tbilisi, Comrade Borontsov suggests including Deputy Gazenko.

We shall take this under consideration.

The meeting is ended for this evening. Now everyone must go and vote.

I declare recesses until 1000 tomorrow.